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**SCHAKOWSKY JOINS WAXMAN AND GEPHARDT
TO INTRODUCE THE NURSING HOME QUALITY PROTECTION ACT**

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) today joined Representative Henry Waxman (D-CA) and House Democratic Leader Dick Gephardt (D-MO) to introduce the Nursing Home Quality Protection Act.

"Earlier this year, I released a study of nursing homes in Chicago. I found that many seniors in Chicago area nursing homes are not receiving quality medical and personal care. That is why I am very pleased today that we are talking about solutions and not only the problem," said Schakowsky.

"Our parents and grandparents are at real risk if we do not take the necessary measures to ensure that they receive the best nursing home care possible. And the Nursing Home Quality Protection Act is a key component in that effort," Schakowsky added.

The Nursing Home Quality Protection Act would impose tougher sanctions on nursing homes that violate federal health and safety standards; reinstate previous law to guarantee that nursing homes receive reasonable rates for their service; use fines to finance grant program to improve quality of nursing home care; and expand public disclosure about nursing home conditions by requiring the Department of Health and Human Services to post detailed information about nursing homes on the Internet.

The principal author of the legislation is Representative Henry Waxman (D-CA), ranking member on the House Government Reform Committee and a senior member of the Commerce Committee.

Schakowsky, who is a cosponsor of the Nursing Home Quality Protection Act, released a report of nursing homes in her district earlier this year. The report found one out of every seven nursing homes in the Chicago metropolitan area had a violation that caused actual harm to residents or placed them at risk of death or serious injury. As a result, they suffer from bedsores, malnutrition, and a host of other disturbing and preventable ailments. The report cited an example of a nursing home where a single nurse aide was left to care for an entire floor of 68 residents in the middle of the afternoon. As a result of staff shortages, residents with pressure sores were left in the same position and in soiled diapers for hours.

"I look forward to working with my colleagues to ensure that our elderly are safe and that no senior is robbed of his or her golden years," Schakowsky said.